REMARKS

Claim 34-45 are all the claims pending in the application.

Applicants would like to thank Examiner Jeremiah Avery for the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative during the telephone interview conducted on October 19, 2009. During the interview, Applicants' representative explained how it is believed that the claimed invention distinguishes over the applied prior art references. In this regard, Applicants note that the remarks presented below correspond to the comments made during the interview.

I. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

A. Claims 34, 36, 37, 39, 41, 42, 44 and 45 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eldridge (US 6,061,799) in view of Arthan (US 6,754,349). Applicants kindly request reconsideration of this rejection in view of the following comments.

Claim 34 recites the feature of a portable recording medium that comprises a controller for inputting from said communication terminal device the signed data set, and for judging, using the public key and the signed data set, whether the signed data set is signed by the external communication terminal device.

Applicants respectfully submit that Eldridge and Arthan do not teach or suggest at least the above-noted feature recited in claim 34.

With respect to Eldridge, as was discussed during the telephone interview, it is noted that this reference discloses the use of a portable recording medium 620 that stores a client identifier 622, a current password 624, non-current passwords 626, and a secret parameter 628 (see Fig. 6B and col. 9, line 65 through col. 10, line 7). In this regard, as explained in Eldridge, the information stored on the portable recording medium 620 is used in an authentication process, in which it is determined whether or not a client process that is identified by the portable recording medium 620 is allowed to access a secure server process 216 (see col. 10, lines 18-27).

Regarding the above-noted authentication process, Eldridge discloses that upon insertion of the portable recording medium 620 into a peripheral device, that the server process 216 detects the presence of the portable recording medium 620, reads the client identifier 622 therefrom, and accesses authentication data (see Fig. 8, steps 800, 802 and 804; and col. 10, lines 27-35). Next, the server process 216 reads the secret parameter 628 and one of the passwords from the portable recording medium 620, and generates authentication data (e.g., key or key identifier) based on the read information (see Fig. 8, steps 806, 808 and 810; and col. 10, lines 35-41).

Thereafter, as disclosed in Eldridge, the server process 216 compares the generated key with the authentication data from database 216a, and determines whether a match occurs (see Fig. 8, step 814; and col. 10, lines 50-54). In this regard, as explained in Eldridge, if a match occurs, then access to the server process 216 is allowed, and if no match occurs, then the process ends (see Fig. 8, steps 814 and 816; and col. 10, lines 50-54).

Next, the server process 216 of Eldridge determines whether the key which matched the authentication data in database 216 was associated with the current password (see Fig. 8, step 818; and col. 10, lines 61-65). If the determination is “yes”, then the process ends, and if the determination is “no”, then the server process 216 reads the current password 624 from the portable recording medium 620 and generates the key or other authentication data associated with the current password and stores such authentication in the database 216A (see Fig. 8, steps

818 and 820; and col. 10, line 65 through col. 11, line 4).

As is evident from the foregoing description, Applicants note that in Eldridge, it is clear that the server process 216 performs the authentication process, including performing the judging steps (see steps 814 and 818 of Fig. 8), and that the portable recording medium 620 is merely used for storing information (e.g., a client identifier 622, a current password 624, non-current passwords 626, and a secret parameter 628) that is used by the server process 216 in performing the authentication process.

As such, Applicants note that because the portable recording medium 620 of Eldridge merely stores information that is used by the server process when performing the authentication process, that Eldridge clearly does not disclose the above-noted feature recited in claim 34 of a portable recording medium that comprises a controller for inputting from said communication terminal device the signed data set, and **for judging**, using the public key and the signed data set, whether the signed data set is signed by the external communication terminal device.

Indeed, Applicants note that the portable recording medium 620 of Eldridge does not include any structure that would enable it to perform a "judging" function (see Fig. 6B), and therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the portable recording medium 620 of Eldridge clearly cannot be interpreted as corresponding to the "portable recording medium" set forth in claim 34.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that Eldridge does not disclose, suggest or otherwise render obvious the above-noted feature recited in claim 34 of a portable recording medium that comprises a controller for inputting from said communication terminal device the signed data set, and **for judging**, using the public key and the signed data set, whether the signed data set is signed by the external communication terminal device.

In addition, because Eldridge does not disclose the use of a portable recording medium having a controller for judging whether a signed data set is signed by an external communication terminal device, as described above, Applicants respectfully submit that Eldridge also clearly does not disclose or suggest the features recited in claim 34 which set forth that the controller of said portable recording medium recovers the same password as the password stored in said memory of said portable recording medium when it is judged that the signed data set is signed by the external communication terminal device, and outputs the recovered password to said communication terminal device, and that the controller of said portable recording medium does not recover the same password as the password stored in said memory of said portable recording medium when it is judged that the signed data set is not signed by the external communication terminal device.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that Eldridge does not disclose, suggest or otherwise render obvious at least the above-noted features recited in claim 34. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that Arthan does not cure these deficiencies of Eldridge. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 34 is patentable over the combination of Eldridge and Arthan, an indication of which is kindly requested. Claim 36 depends from claim 34 and is therefore considered patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

Regarding claim 37, Applicants note that this claim recites the feature of a portable recording medium that comprises a controller for inputting from said communication terminal device the signed data set, and for judging, using the public key and the signed data set, whether the signed data set is signed by the external communication terminal device, wherein the controller of the portable recording medium recovers the same password as the password stored in the memory of the portable recording medium when it is judged that the signed data set is signed by the external communication terminal device, and outputs the recovered password to said communication terminal device, and wherein the controller of the portable recording medium does not recover the same password as the password stored in the memory of the portable recording medium when it is judged that the signed data set is not signed by the external communication terminal device.

For at least similar reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 34, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Eldridge and Arthan does not teach, suggest or otherwise render obvious the above-noted features recited in claim 37. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 37 is patentable over the cited prior art, an indication of which is kindly requested. Claims 39 and 41 depend from claim 37 and are therefore considered patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

Regarding claim 42, Applicants note that this claim is directed to a portable recording medium comprising a controller for inputting from the communication terminal device the signed data set, and for judging, using the public key and the signed data set, whether the signed data set is signed by the external communication terminal device, wherein said controller recovers the same password as the password stored in said memory of said portable recording medium when it is judged that the signed data set is signed by the external communication terminal device, and outputs the recovered password to the communication terminal device, and wherein said controller does not recover the same password as the password stored in said memory of said portable recording medium when it is judged that the signed data set is not signed by the external communication terminal device.

For at least similar reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 34, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Eldridge and Arthan does not teach, suggest or otherwise render obvious the above-noted features recited in claim 42. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 42 is patentable over the cited prior art, an indication of which is kindly requested. Claim 44 depends from claim 42 and is therefore considered patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

Regarding claim 45, Applicants note that this claim recites the feature of judging, at the portable recording medium, using the public key and the signed data set, whether the signed data set is signed by the external communication terminal device, wherein, when it is judged by said judging that the signed data set is signed by the external communication terminal device, the portable recording medium recovers the same password as the password stored in the memory of the portable recording medium, and outputs the recovered password to the communication terminal device, and wherein, when it is judged by said judging that the signed data set is not signed by the external communication terminal device, the portable recording medium does not recover the same password as the password stored in the memory of the portable recording medium.

For at least similar reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 34, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Eldridge and Arthan does not teach, suggest or otherwise render obvious the above-noted features recited in claim 45. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 45 is patentable over the cited prior art, an indication of which is kindly requested.

B. Claims 35, 38 and 43 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eldridge (US 6,061,799) in view of Arthan (US 6,754,349), and further in view of Rhoads (US 6,947,571)

Claims 35, 38 and 43 depend from claims 34, 37 and 42, respectively. Applicants respectfully submit that Rhoads does not cure the deficiencies of Eldridge and Arthan, as discussed above, with respect to claims 34, 37 and 42. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 35, 38 and 43 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

C. Claim 40 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eldridge (US 6,061,799) in view of Arthan (US 6,754,349), and further in view of Desai (6,820,204).

Claim 40 depends from claim 37. Applicants respectfully submit that Desai fails to cure the deficiencies of Eldridge and Arthan, as discussed above, with respect to claim 37. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 40 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

II. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may best be resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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